

The Sir James Whitney School, Belleville, serves hearing impaired students in eastern and northern Ontario. In central Ontario and the Niagara region such students are served by the Ernest C. Drury School, Milton, and in southwestern Ontario by the Robarts School, London.

Although the primary responsibility for the provision of educational programs and services for students with learning disabilities remains with the school boards, there are three residential demonstration schools in Ontario for children with severe learning disabilities: the Trillium School in Milton, the Centre Jules-Léger in Ottawa (for French-speaking pupils), and the Sagonaska School in Belleville. A pupil may be admitted to one of these schools if he or she is referred by a school board to the Provincial Committee on Learning Disabilities.

The Ministry of Community and Social Services and the Ministry of Health fund or operate facilities for persons who are mentally retarded, developmentally handicapped, emotionally disturbed, or multihandicapped, and are in need of care and treatment. Educational programs provided by school boards for school-age residents in these facilities are funded by the Ministry of Education.

Finally, the Ministry of Education provides financial assistance for special education through a series of grants to school boards. These grants help the boards to meet the needs of identified exceptional pupils as well as of those pupils with special needs who require special programs but have not been identified as exceptional.

## Additional Information

Further information about programs and services for children with special needs may be obtained from your local school board or from one of the six regional offices of the Ministry of Education listed below:

Central Ontario Region  
Heron's Hill Building  
Suite 3201  
2025 Sheppard Avenue East  
Willowdale, Ontario  
M2J 1W4  
(416) 491-0330

Eastern Ontario Region  
1580 Merivale Road  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K2G 3J9  
(613) 225-9210

Midnorthern Ontario Region  
199 Larch Street, 7th Floor  
Sudbury, Ontario  
P3E 5P9  
(705) 675-4436

Northeastern Ontario Region  
Box 3020  
447 McKeown Avenue  
North Bay, Ontario  
P1B 8K7  
(705) 474-7210

Northwestern Ontario Region  
435 James Street South  
Thunder Bay, Ontario  
P7E 6E3  
(807) 475-1581

Western Ontario Region  
759 Hyde Park Road  
London, Ontario  
N6H 3S6  
(519) 472-1440

Toll-free lines may be available in your area. Please check the blue pages of your telephone book.

For information and other pamphlets in this series, please contact:

Ministry of Education  
Public Enquiries Unit  
Policy Analysis and Research Branch  
Queen's Park  
Mowat Block, 13th Floor  
Toronto, Ontario  
M7A 1L2  
(416) 965-6407

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The Honourable Sean Conway, Minister  
Bernard J. Shapiro, Deputy Minister

# Education for Pupils With Special Needs

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## Legislation and Exceptional Pupils

Your child may be among the approximately 310 000 students in Ontario who have educational needs that differ significantly from the needs of other pupils. Each school-age pupil in Ontario, however, regardless of his or her special needs, is entitled to attend a publicly supported school. The Education Act requires school boards to provide special education programs and services to meet the needs of pupils identified as exceptional. An exceptional pupil is one whose behavioural, communicational, intellectual, physical, or multiple exceptionalities are such that he or she is considered by an Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC) to need placement in a special education program.

Legislation also provides for the involvement of parents or guardians of exceptional pupils in assessments, in the identification of needs, and in placement decisions, reviews, and appeals. Parents, teachers, principals, and local school board officials are encouraged to work together to provide an education of the highest possible quality for each student.

## Identification and Placement of Exceptional Pupils

In many cases, the special needs of pupils can be met in a regular classroom by making adaptations in courses of study, giving teachers opportunities to consult appropriate specialists, and providing other special assistance, such as additional staff with specialized skills or special materials or equipment.

In cases where a pupil is not functioning effectively in a regular class, however, alternative instructional arrangements have to be considered. Specialized instructional settings allow for greater pupil-teacher interaction and a greater focus on individual needs. School boards therefore provide individual or small-group instruction programs or special education classes, so that each pupil may receive the attention he or she requires in order to function effectively.

If, after consultation with your child's teachers and school principal, you come to the conclusion that your child requires a special education program, write to your school principal requesting that an Identification, Placement, and Review Committee assess the needs of your child.

For further information regarding the Identification, Placement, and Review Committee process, contact your school principal and request a copy of your board's guide for parents, which also outlines the special education programs and services offered by the board.

## Provincial Programs and Services in Support of Special Education

The Ontario Ministry of Education, in co-operation with local school boards, is constantly working to ensure that high-quality special education programs and services are available to serve the needs of exceptional pupils. The Ministry of Education's initiatives in support of special education include the following:

- All ministry-produced curriculum guidelines allow for courses of study to be adapted by school boards so that the needs of individual exceptional pupils can be met. Curriculum resource documents have been developed in order to assist both regular and special education teachers with program development for and evaluation of exceptional pupils.
- The ministry maintains contact with parents' and professional organizations in order to facilitate communication on special education issues.
- Special education policy and legislation are reviewed regularly, to ensure that they keep pace with changing community and professional views and concerns.
- The ministry works closely with school boards to assist them in carrying out their responsibilities regarding the professional development of staff.

In support of these programs and services at the school-board level, the Ministry of Education also operates a number of provincial schools and demonstration facilities that provide services to pupils and serve as training centres for teachers.

The W. Ross Macdonald School, Brantford, serves blind and deaf-blind pupils from all parts of Ontario and provides special resource services in support of blind and deaf-blind pupils in local programs across the province.

